


DOES IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Examining Consumers'
Attitude towards
Sustainability Efforts
within the Fast Fashion
Industry through Trust
and Perceived
Consumer
Effectiveness

Master Thesis —
Submitted in Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the
Degree Masters of
Science



NOVA SBE
Professor —
Luis Martinez
Submitted by —
Hannah Laura Neumann #3062
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Abstract

In the context of environmental sustainability in the fashion industry, developing positive consumer perceptions and attitudes about efforts of companies to take responsibility, as well as trust is vital in terms purchase intention. Furthermore, perceived consumer effectiveness, a feeling of empowerment in consumers to contribute to solving environmental problems, is found to be a strong predictor of environmentally conscious consumer behavior. It remains yet unanswered, if these concepts apply to the setting of two well-known fashion brands, ZARA and H&M, and their sustainable clothing lines, and if favorable perceptions about these brands could enhance perceived consumer effectiveness. To answer these questions, we developed a framework that depicts the relationships between perceptions of social responsibility, consumer attitude, trust, purchase intention, and perceived consumer effectiveness. An online survey was conducted with an internationally diverse sample of 216 consumers, and the data was analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling. The results indicated that perceptions of social responsibility directly affect consumers' attitudes towards ZARA and H&M, as well as trust and perceived consumer effectiveness. Trust was found to be a direct predictor of purchase intention. Consumer attitude and perceived consumer effectiveness, however, did not predict purchase intention. Results are discussed, and theoretical and practical implications are presented.

Keywords

Sustainability · Corporate Social Responsibility · Environmental Sustainability ·
Environmentally Conscious Consumer Behavior · Sustainable Fashion

List of Abbreviations

CB	Consumer / Consumption Behavior
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
EC	Environmental Concern
ECCB	Environmentally Conscious Consumer Behavior
ECBB	Environmentally / Ecologically Conscious Buyer Behavior
(E)S	(Environmental / Ecological) Sustainability
GA	General Attitude
PCE	Perceived Consumer Effectiveness
SD	Sustainable Development
SF	Sustainable Fashion
SR	Social Responsibility

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1. Introduction

“Why do I feel so strongly that fashion is a pivotal industry to get right? Firstly, because it is a full spectrum industry. It extends from the farmers that grow cotton to the women beading in ateliers, it encompasses millions of people from agriculture to the creative marketing and selling. It is also dependent on the animal kingdom and some of the most fragile ecosystems on Earth” – Livia Firth (Huffington Post, 2014).

It is argued that the fashion industry is the second most polluting industry in the world, threatening our planet and its resources (Business of Fashion, 2015). This seems to be echoed by consumers’ rising concern for the impact of their purchasing decisions on the environment (Kang, Liu, & Kim, 2013). Companies and brands from various sectors have reacted by developing environmentally friendly production processes and products (Haws, Page, & Walker, 2014; Kang et al., 2013). Sustainability has also advanced into the fashion industry, although there is still the notion of a partial incompatibility of the two – thinking about the environment while shopping for clothes seems to impair consumers’ pleasure and hedonic reasons to engage in it in the first place (Valor, 2007). However, despite a rising concern among consumers, they often hesitate to directly translate their considerations into action (D’Astous & Legendre, 2009), due to several reasons. Fast fashion brands like ZARA and H&M are viewed to be unsustainable due to their nature alone (Joy, Sherry, Venkatesh, Wang, & Chan, 2012), and sustainability efforts of these companies are frequently questioned and perceived as untruthful (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014). Moreover, consumers often do not feel they can make a difference regarding environmental problems as an individual (Ritch, 2015). At the same time, both ZARA and H&M have quite successfully launched their own sustainable clothing lines, but does it make a difference in consumers’ minds? All these issues induced us to further investigate into this matter. In this work, we will build on ZARA’s *Join Life Collection* and H&M’s *Conscious Collection*, examine their success in terms of consumer attitude and

investigate whether consumers trust claims of ZARA and H&M regarding their pro-environmental efforts. We will also explore how consumers feel they could individually affect environmental issues, if this is affected by perceptions of sustainability efforts, and how it translates into their intention to purchase sustainable clothing of ZARA and H&M.

2. Literature Review

Firstly, we will give an introduction into sustainability, distinguishing it from other related topics like Ethicality and (C)SR, and illuminating the specific area of ES. Subsequently, ES will be examined in the fashion industry, focusing on the fast fashion segment, while discussing sustainable CB in detail using theoretical constructs such as perceptions of SR, GA, PI, trust, and PCE.

2.1 Sustainability – An Introduction to the Concept

In the following, sustainability will be explored regarding its emergence, definition and distinction from other related concepts, finally narrowing the broad matter down to ES.

2.1.1 The Emergence of Sustainability and Sustainable Development

Industrial development over the past decades brought prosperity and wealth to our economy (Shrivastava, 1995). Globalization, with its removal of trade barriers and the opening and exploration of foreign, distant markets increased overseas trade, output of production, and employment, and has further brought cultural richness. However, the previously mentioned developments have two faces (Milanovic, 2003). Operating in an increasingly competitive global marketplace urged many companies to outsource activities to foreign countries to save costs (Weidenbaum, 2005). While this has created jobs overseas, it also contributed to a dispersion of a company's supply chain and reduced accountability (Bly, Gwozdz, & Reisch, 2015). Increased output and availability of products resulted in amplified CB (Gladwin, Kennelly, & Krause, 1995). Our planet's resources are not infinite. As an unintended side effect, human progress, vast population growth and 'overconsumption' have also caused negative

effects (Milanovic, 2003). We are facing many environmental problems, such as loss of biodiversity, climate change or global warming, freshwater scarcity and food insecurity, ozone depletion and deforestation, further social issues like inequity or poverty (Gladwin et al., 1995; Shrivastava, 1995). Consequently, research increasingly recognized the importance for an awareness of these issues and for corporations, governments and consumers to react (Shrivastava, 1995). Sustainability was initially discussed under the term ‘sustainable development’ (SD) (Gladwin et al., 1995), and is defined as a “development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (UN, 1987, p. 8). SD is guided by several principles. For instance, SD should embrace both human and environmental systems, in the present as well as in the future (‘inclusiveness’). It should be recognized that a nation cannot reach its economic without achieving social and environmental goals (‘connectivity’) (Gladwin et al., 1995), also denoted as the ‘triple bottom line’ (Barkemeyer, Holt, Preuss, & Tsang, 2014; Elkington, 1994). Resources should be distributed fairly, within and between present and future generations (‘equity’), who should be entitled to a safe and healthy life (‘security’). The scale of impact of human activity should be kept within regenerative capacities, keeping life-supporting ecosystems and socioeconomic systems stable, avoiding irreversible actions (‘prudence’). (Gladwin et al., 1995). More recently, Sustainability is more in use than SD, but both denotations are used interchangeably (Barkemeyer et al., 2014; Gladwin et al., 1995; Niinimäki, 2015). The extensive definition previously presented is still utilized in current literature (Shen, Richards, & Liu, 2013), however, there are also many other definitions trying to capture it (Joy et al., 2012). Sustainability is highly complex, as it involves several dynamic systems and shows intersections among ecological, economic and sociopolitical dimensions, both globally and locally (Joy et al., 2012). Consequently, there are also multiple parties involved.

Consumers have become increasingly aware of sustainability (Ritch, 2015), requiring governmental institutions and companies to take actions, while they frequently seem to be unaware or uninformed of their responsibility and the impact of their own CB (Joergens, 2006). Governmental institutions have mitigated many environmental and social problems through policies and programs, but their efforts need to be complemented by corporations in order to fully address these issues (Gladwin et al., 1995; Shrivastava, 1995). Often, companies arguably are the “primary engines of economic development”, and are thus assigned with an enormous responsibility (Shrivastava, 1995, p. 937). Their frequently global operations have a high impact on the planet and its people, and they have the necessary financial and technological resources to bring about sustainable solutions (Gladwin et al., 1995; Shrivastava, 1995), which is of interest to them for many reasons. For one, they as human beings are equally affected by the consequences of their actions (Gladwin et al., 1995). On the other hand, there are reasons of competitiveness and profitability (Maxfield, 2008). As consumers become more knowledgeable, they expect companies to reflect their ethical concerns. If companies manage to do so, they will be rewarded with a positive consumer response, improving the strength of the company-customer-relationship, further increasing customer loyalty and thus, retention and repurchase rate (Naylor & Trudel, 2012; Singh, Iglesias, & Batista-Foguet, 2012). However, in the end, everyone in society needs to take responsibility (Yahya & Hashim, 2013), and “corporations are only one of the many wheels” of sustainability (Shrivastava, 1995, p. 937).

Nowadays, sustainability is ever-present (Luchs & Kumar, 2015). It represents an integral part of companies’ lives and a key issue for businesses across all industries (Bonini & Swartz, 2014; Kapferer & Michaut-Denizeau, 2014). There are numerous initiatives promoting approaches to fight climate change, an efficient use of resources, as well as global gender equality (UN Environment, 2016). Consumers too are starting to take responsibility, with the trend of ‘sustainable consumerism’ on the rise (Singh et al., 2012; Valor, 2007).

2.1.2 Sustainability, Ethicality and Corporate Social Responsibility

The terms ‘ethics’, or ‘ethicality’ are frequently found when researching about sustainability. Ethics deals with the question of ‘how we should live and act’ and is “a part of what defines us as human beings” (“What is Ethics?,” 2017), which has similarly been mentioned in literature about sustainability (Gladwin et al., 1995). This points towards ethics and sustainability further being closely related to morality and values¹. Furthermore, (Gladwin et al., 1995) acknowledge the ethical grounding of sustainability. Common ethical issues discuss environmental issues on the one hand, such as the use of organically grown or environmentally friendly materials within the production process, or producing ‘clean and green products’ (Bray, Johns, & Kilburn, 2011; Jung, Kim, & Oh, 2016; Singh et al., 2012; Wesley, Lee, & Kim, 2012), mitigating the depletion of natural resources (Bray et al., 2011), fighting waste and caring for animal well-being (Wesley et al., 2012). On the other hand, social issues are mentioned as well, as for instance fair trade principles, working practices, or labor conditions in Western and developing nations (Antonetti & Maklan, 2014; Bray et al., 2011; Wesley et al., 2012), human rights and resigning to use child labor in production (Wesley et al., 2012). All these elements of ethics show a strong overlap with sustainability. Another similarity is that both assign responsibility to several parties, as companies or brands (Jung et al., 2016; Kang & Hustvedt, 2014; Wesley et al., 2012), as well as consumers are advised to behave in an ethical manner (Bray et al., 2011; Wesley et al., 2012). Companies too can benefit from incorporating ethics into their strategy, i.e. in terms of defining and promoting their brand, and investing in an ethically favorable image and social causes could be proven to increase financial performance (Singh et al., 2012). Despite the strong similarities, one observes that researchers often discuss ethics and ‘ecology’ or EC distinguished from one another (Jung et al., 2016; Kang & Hustvedt, 2014). Ethics seems to occasionally be connoted with a stricter focus on

¹ morality and value in this context; basic cognitive belief among individuals about right and wrong (Niinimäki, 2015; Singh et al., 2012)

social issues than providing a holistic view over social and environmental problems like sustainability. However, overall, researchers use both terms somewhat interchangeably (Antonetti & Maklan, 2014; Ehrich & Irwin, 2005), thus we will not differentiate between the two terms, but will continue speaking of sustainability for consistency.

Another term often found in this context is CSR of companies or brands (D'Astous & Legendre, 2009; Kang & Hustvedt, 2014; Singh et al., 2012), or socially responsible CB (Valor, 2007; Wesley et al., 2012). Similar to sustainability, CSR or socially responsible CB deal with social, as well as environmental issues and are defined as voluntarily integrating the interests of society and the environment into business or consumer decisions (Rubel, 2010). The term CSR applies exclusively to a company's point of view, and is, in parallel with sustainability, vital to a company's overall strategy (Keys, Malnight, & van der Graaf, 2009). It deals with pursuing benefits for the firm, as well as for society (Keys et al., 2009), similar to sustainability. In integrating CSR into their strategy, companies aim to inform society about their business activities and increase transparency (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014), portray themselves as being socially responsible (Singh et al., 2012) and improve their reputation with regard to consumers' perceptions, with similar positive consequences as sustainability (Naylor & Trudel, 2012). Whereas sustainability broadly describes the previously discussed environmental and social issues, CSR is understood as the explicit manner of companies meeting the needs of socially responsible consumers (Wesley et al., 2012), thus might take on a responsible role more actively. From a consumer's point of view, sustainable and socially responsible consumerism basically discuss the same, a consumption which considers potential impacts on both society and the environment (Valor, 2007; Wesley et al., 2012). (C) SR and sustainability are regularly mentioned collectively in literature (Carrigan & Attala, 2001; Joy et al., 2012; Kang & Hustvedt, 2014; Shen et al., 2013; Singh et al., 2012), or even used interchangeably (Solér, Baeza, Svärd, & Sole, 2015).

2.1.3 Sustainability and the Environment

Early sustainability initiatives occasionally prioritized SD in the light of EC over a solicitude for equity or poverty (Barkemeyer et al., 2014), as it was argued that environmental protection is the most important value when it comes to SD (Niinimäki, 2015). Nevertheless, in line with (Seidman, 2007), we acknowledge that sustainability is about much more than our relationship with the environment, and consider social aspects just as important as environmental ones, which is further supported by the principle of ‘connectivity’ behind sustainability. However, continuing to discuss the broad matter of sustainability would exceed the scope of this thesis, therefore, we decided to primarily concentrate on ES and ECCB. For one, this has been discussed beforehand by several research publications (Haws et al., 2014; Jung et al., 2016; Leary, Vann, Mittelstaedt, Murphy, & Sherry, 2014; Yahya & Hashim, 2013). On the other hand, consumers show a willingness to incorporate their concern for the environment into their CB, for example through recycling (Kim & Choi, 2005; Shen et al., 2013), which makes it seem reasonable to further pursue this area of sustainability.

2.2 Sustainability in the Fashion Industry

From now on, we will exclusively focus on the fashion industry. Thus, in the following, the emergence and definition of ES in the fashion industry will be discussed. Afterwards, we will shortly contrast luxury and fast fashion in the background of a compatibility with sustainability. We will then concentrate on two fast fashion brands and illustrate how they implement ES into their product offerings. Lastly, we will thoroughly examine CB in this context, while using several concepts from ES literature.

2.2.1 The Emergence of (Environmental) Sustainability in the Fashion Industry

Over the past decade, ES began to become widely acknowledged in the fashion industry and probably one of the first movements was criticism from animal rights activists for the use of fur or animal skin in fashion clothing products (Emberley, 1998). It is argued that the fashion

industry is the second most polluting industry in the world, with every stage in a garment's life threatening our planet and its resources (Business of Fashion, 2015). Especially affordable and trend-sensitive fashion, while highly profitable for companies, has raised ethical concerns (Joy et al., 2012), and companies start to consider the consequences of their design and industrial manufacturing processes in the context of SD (Niinimäki, 2015). Likewise, academic literature underlines the necessity for fashion brands to more strongly incorporate ES into their offering (Ritch, 2015). Moreover, consumers are beginning to transfer their concerns for the environment, which originally mainly involved food consumption choices, to the fashion context (Ritch, 2015; Shen et al., 2013).

SF is also designated as 'green' (Shen et al., 2013), 'ethical' (Joergens, 2006; Manchiraju & Sadachar, 2014) or 'eco' fashion (Solér et al., 2015), with all terms used synonymously (Shaw & Newholm, 2007; Shen et al., 2013). Grasping this issue continues to be difficult (Shen et al., 2013). SF is defined as "(apparel) that incorporates fair trade principles with sweatshop-free labor conditions; that does not harm the environment or workers by using biodegradable and organic cotton, and designed for a longer lifetime use; that is produced in an ethical production system, perhaps even locally, which causes little or no environmental impact and makes use of eco-labeled or recycled materials" (Joergens, 2006, p. 361; Kang & Hustvedt, 2014; Shen et al., 2013, p. 135). In line with our previous argumentation, some researchers assign a stronger focus on social issues, such as fair trade principles and a production system without sweatshop labor conditions to the term ethical fashion, whereas ecological, environmental, or 'green' fashion primarily deals with environmental matters, like a promotion of the use of recycled materials and biodegradable fibers in production (Shen et al., 2013). Once again, it needs to be noted that our focus lies on the second one of the two. In this context, 'reduce', 'reuse', 'recycle' have become guiding principles for both companies and consumers to fight damage to the environment (Binotto & Payne, 2017). Moreover, one needs to

differentiate between environmentally SF in general, and environmentally SF CB (Ritch, 2015), the latter elaborated in detail in the last section of this chapter².

SF takes different perspectives. For once, the nature and material of the product are important. The term sustainable or ethical apparel primarily describes textile clothing products (Hustvedt & Bernard, 2008; Hustvedt & Dickson, 2009; Joy et al., 2012; E. Y. Kim & Kim, 2009), but is also occasionally used in a broader sense, then encompassing textile clothing products and other materials, and every item worn outwardly (Jung et al., 2016). When talking about material, ES in the fashion industry attaches great importance to the type of fiber being used (Hustvedt & Bernard, 2008). Throughout this thesis, we will concentrate on apparel in the sense of textile clothing products, and material in terms of the type of fiber being used, which will be applied to the concrete setting of two fashion brands later in this chapter. Secondly, SF can be viewed through the perspective of a company's supply chain. As its definition already partly hinted at, and as previously stated, how a fashion company organizes its supply chain carries some important implications for the sustainable nature of its products (Valor, 2007), especially due to the trend of globalization and a resulting increased complexity in accountability (Joy et al., 2012). This is constantly demanding fashion companies to surveil and reevaluate (parts of) their chain of supply (Keller, Magnus, Hedrich, Nava, & Tochtermann, 2014; Singer, 2015), in order to remain competitive in their industry (Valor, 2007). For example, when it comes to material, its source and production method, is vital for a product to be labelled sustainable (Hustvedt & Bernard, 2008). Furthermore, the site of production plays a role, with local production as the most sustainable option (Hustvedt & Bernard, 2008; Shen et al., 2013), however, depending on the price of its products, local production is often not an option for fashion companies nowadays (Joy et al., 2012). The origin of the product is also closely connected with the way it is made, i.e. in an ethical manner without any unfair

² see Appendix 1 for a detailed collection of definitions and conceptualizations of SF

conditions for workers involved (Joergens, 2006). Again, as the last aspect also comes within the social issues of sustainability (in the fashion industry), we will not elaborate it any further. While elements within the supply chain certainly are very important in the context of sustainability, it needs to be underlined once more that nowadays, a company's supply chain is of global reach and highly fragmented (Joy et al., 2012), thus giving greater attention to this matter would exceed the scope of this thesis. Lastly, as already briefly mentioned, SF can and needs to be viewed through the lenses of its consumers, which we elaborate further in the last chapter of the literature review. To better understand sustainability in the fashion context, we will firstly take a closer look at different segments within this industry and their compatibility with a sustainable approach.

2.2.2 Compatibility – Luxury versus Fast Fashion

The fashion industry is divided into different segments, with respect to product pricing – luxury, with high end (e.g. Chanel) and affordable luxury brands (e.g. Michael Kors, Tory Burch), premium (e.g. Nike, Esprit), mid- or mass-market (e.g. ZARA, H&M), value and discount (Amed et al., 2016). Mass market brands like ZARA and H&M are synonymously discussed under the term 'fast fashion' (Joy et al., 2012; Kapferer & Michaut-Denizeau, 2014). For this section, we additionally chose to highlight some differences concerning the compatibility of luxury brands with ES, as opposed to fast fashion brands. Especially these two segments, once characterized as opposite ends of the fashion spectrum, highly contribute to the dynamic playing field of the fashion industry, with a formerly distinctive line between the two becoming increasingly blurry (Verde Nieto, 2015). Furthermore, these segments, when compared with each other, aid very well in explaining the fascinating yet complex relationship between sustainability and fashion (Joy et al., 2012). Incorporating sustainability is a must for every fashion brand (Solér et al., 2015), carrying benefits for themselves, as well as reputational advantages in the view of their customers. However, one might wonder, although the need to

implement sustainability and the resulting benefits are well recognized, why, at the same time, a slow growth in SF is observed (Solér et al., 2015). While many fashion brands already incorporated sustainability (Jung et al., 2016), they remain reluctant to more openly communicate it ('muted sustainability') (Solér et al., 2015). Thus, to answer the question whether sustainability and fashion are compatible, we need to talk about reasons why implementing it might be difficult for fashion brands, and will do so through looking at luxury and fast fashion. It is very important for a fashion brand to pay attention to customer perception, i.e. what the customer views the brand epitomizes and in turn, how the customer views him or herself when purchasing an item, which is why fashion brands frequently hesitate to communicate their sustainability efforts at the risk of being primarily associated with 'green' and 'eco', rather than 'chic' or 'cool' (Solér et al., 2015).

When looking at luxury fashion, certain components of its definition seem compatible with sustainability. Luxury fashion is associated with high quality, know-how, slow time, the preservation of handmade traditions, and producing timeless products passed on from generation to generation – all these aspects are in agreement with sustainability (Kapferer & Michaut-Denizeau, 2014). On the other side, luxury fashion is something distant that not everyone can access, but dreams about (Joy et al., 2012; Kapferer & Bastien, 2009), highly connoted with emotions. Having to deal with sustainability, which can cause stress and negative emotions, might hurt the dream behind luxury for consumers (Kapferer & Michaut-Denizeau, 2014). Consequently, many buyers view luxury is not compatible with ES – a luxury fashion item made from recycled material would mean that it has had a previous life, would no longer be rare, and lose its prestige (Kapferer & Michaut-Denizeau, 2014). Nevertheless, some fashion brands have managed to stand for luxury, as well as a sustainable approach, like pioneer Stella McCartney (Jung et al., 2016; "Sustainability at Stella McCartney," 2017). ES has even arrived at Haute Couture, the ultimate discipline of luxury fashion, as the design duo Viktor &

Rolf started to put together broken vintage party dresses to give them a new life (Gross, 2017). When discussing fast fashion's compatibility with ES, it has long been argued that its mere nature prohibits fast fashion to be sustainable. Frequently also labelling it as 'waste couture', academics argue that the business model behind fast fashion brands is, as the name already indicates, a fast-response system. Once new fashion trends have been shown on the catwalks of its creators, the designers of luxury brands, it used to take up to six months from catwalk to consumer (Joy et al., 2012). Brands like ZARA and H&M have changed this to a matter of mere weeks, constantly encouraging customers to keep coming back for the latest trends at a rate that has speed up so fast that literature talks about an 'encouraged disposability' of fashion (Joy et al., 2012). This in turn has prompted luxury brands to adapt, for example in the form of shortened product-life-cycles (Verde Nieto, 2015). However, one might falsely jump to the conclusion that fast fashion and sustainability do not go together. Quite the contrary, it is argued that sustainability, if aiming for a wider acceptance among fashion consumers, needs to be mainstreamed through mass market brands like ZARA and H&M, as these brands reach a wider audience than luxury brands (Ritch, 2015). If this will ever become a reality remains yet unanswered, and when talking about which segment bears more responsibility, we do not want to establish any ascending order. However, we view examining sustainability in the fashion industry based on fast fashion brands like ZARA and H&M, which are internationally well-known and available, to be a worthwhile starting point.

2.2.3 Implementation of Environmental Sustainability into the Business Model – ZARA and H&M

ZARA belongs to the portfolio of Spanish Inditex, one of the largest retail fashion groups in the world, with eight brands in 93 markets (Inditex, 2017). H&M is part of the H&M Group, founded in Sweden, operating six brands in 84 markets (H&M Group, 2017b).

Inditex shows a strong commitment to ES in its annual report, in line with the ‘seventeen SD goals’ proposed by the United Nations. To name only a few, the company focuses on an increased traceability and integrity of its supply chain to ensure that every supplier they work with operates in compliance with environmental legislations, product health and safety, also making sure that the group has an accurate knowledge of its suppliers. Furthermore, they strive to achieve the most efficient use of resources possible, and a superior quality of their products in this context, the latter implying the importance of selecting the appropriate raw materials for their clothes. Consequently, the company’s professionals and its scientific partners constantly supervise every stage of the creation of its clothing, and aim at achieving a ‘circular economy model’ where they ‘close the loop’, which means they do not only source new material in the most sustainable possible way, but also reuse and recycle clothing (Inditex, 2015). In 2016, ZARA launched its first SF line, the *Join Life Collection* (Very, 2016), using materials such as organic or recycled cotton, recycled polyester, or a new fiber called ‘Tencel Lyocel’, consisting of recycled cotton and wood from sustainably cultivated forests (Inditex, 2015; ZARA, 2017). Moreover, renewable energy is used in production. Similarly, the H&M Group commits to fighting environmental issues like climate change and, for instance, has signed the ‘Earth Statement’, a global petition for eight ambitious climate goals, with a strong focus on, among others, the phasing out of fossil fuels and greenhouse gases, and the promotion of climate innovations (H&M Group, 2015). H&M aims to make the textile industry more sustainable, for instance through an amplified transparency and traceability of its supply chain. In 2010, and here it captures a pioneer role compared to ZARA, H&M launched its sustainable line, the *Conscious Collection* (H&M Group, 2015), to ‘make fashion sustainable and sustainability fashionable’ (H&M Group, 2017a). Clothes of the *Conscious Collection* are produced with materials such as recycled polyester or organic cotton (H&M, 2017a; H&M Group, 2015).

2.2.4 Environmentally Sustainable Consumer Behavior in the Fast Fashion Industry

Consumers are powerful actors in the ES movement (D'Astous & Legendre, 2009) and research has been urging to devote more attention to individual CB towards clothes in the context of ES (Valor, 2007). Furthermore, their demand significantly drives the production of fashion companies (Binotto & Payne, 2017; Joy et al., 2012). Thus it is vital to understand the complex mechanisms behind their CB in this context (Joergens, 2006; Leary et al., 2014), which is sometimes even contradictory (Carrigan & Attala, 2001; Shen et al., 2013).

CB regarding SF was already mentioned, however, needs yet to be defined. CB in the sustainability context is labelled as sustainable (Fennis, Adriaanse, Stroebe, & Pol, 2011; Leary et al., 2014), ethical (Bray et al., 2011; Carrington, Neville, & Whitwell, 2010), or socially responsible buying and CB (Hustvedt & Dickson, 2009; Valor, 2007). Regarding ES, it is denoted as 'green' (Haws et al., 2014; Kim & Choi, 2005), environmentally responsible (Berger & Corbin, 1992; Hustvedt & Dickson, 2009) or sustainable CB and purchase behavior (Kang et al., 2013), and ECBB (Leary et al., 2014). Applied to the fashion setting, it is conceptualized as sustainable, ethical, or 'eco fashion consumption' (Bly et al., 2015; Ritch, 2015; Solér et al., 2015), and is a CB that incorporates concerns about consumers' effects on the external world when buying, using and disposing of fashion products. Expressing sustainable CB in this context ranges from consumers avoiding unsustainable fashion products, to boycotting brands (Jung et al., 2016)³.

Consumers increasingly have the opportunity to choose between environmentally friendly and traditional (clothing) products (Haws et al., 2014). To better understand why and how they consume fashion sustainably, it is advised to also comprehend why consumers might have difficulties to do so (D'Astous & Legendre, 2009; De Cremer & van Dijk, 2002). While lack of availability of stylish options (Joergens, 2006) and an often higher price (Joy et al.,

³ see Appendix 2 for a detailed collection of definitions and conceptualizations of S(F) CB

2012) are acknowledged obstacles to consumers, we would like to highlight some internal processes hindering SF CB, such as the role of values and decision making. Values are important, as they affect a wide spectrum of behavior and consumer decision processes. There broadly are utilitarian (functionality, quality, durability), hedonic (seeking novelty), and conspicuous (belonging to a group, status) values in consumption (Jung et al., 2016)⁴. When shopping for clothes, all of these values matter, however, when SF comes into play, consumers often feel they have to trade-off their values for sustainability (Luchs & Kumar, 2015), thus hesitating to purchase the sustainable alternative. Further, sustainable CB has been characterized as a result of rather rational or utilitarian decision making, but when it comes to fashion, there is also a lot of emotion to it (Solér et al., 2015). Fashion is highly symbolic, allowing its owner to express self-identity, not only about the current self ('who I am'), but also about the aspirational or ideal self ('who I would like to be') (Valor, 2007). Fashion allows for the creation of multiple identities, which is facilitated through affordable fashion of ZARA and H&M. Frequently, consumers are unwilling to give up on this symbolic value to consume more sustainably (Joy et al., 2012).

Perceptions of Social Responsibility (SR)

Several studies suggest that consumers are willing to support socially responsible companies (Barone, Miyazaki, & Taylor, 2000). As already mentioned, CSR activities have a positive impact for firms in terms of customer satisfaction, and the relationship between consumers and companies is influenced by the consumers' subjective estimation of the company's behavior, regarding what it openly communicates within its CSR efforts, as well as unobserved intentions (Kitchin, 2003). This indicates that the impact of customer opinions about SR of firms should not be neglected, and that it is further connected to general attitudes that consumers have about a company (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014).

⁴ value; personal assessment of the net worth obtained from an activity (Jung et al., 2016)

(General) Attitude (GA)

Consumer attitude⁵ plays a vital role in sustainable CB (Jung et al., 2016). Attitudes are complex, as they are influenced by an individual's values, beliefs, and perceptions about social pressure (subjective norms⁶) (Jung et al., 2016; Kang et al., 2013). A consumer's belief that is in favor of the environment⁷ (or EC) often is a required antecedent, followed by the consumer gathering further information and knowledge about sustainable products (Shen et al., 2013), which is then set within their perception of the social context and their attitudes (Jung et al., 2016). Consumers' attitudes are becoming increasingly favorable of sustainability issues (Ehrich & Irwin, 2005) and were recently found to be a valid construct for predicting ECCB across numerous fields, including fashion (Halepete, Littrell, & Park, 2009; Kang et al., 2013). Attitudes, if antecedently positively influenced by a company's sustainability efforts, further positively affect a consumer's intention to purchase products from the company (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014). In line with (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014), we incorporate GA into our analysis to obtain a general understanding of the psychology of ethical consumers. When studying a specific behavior like CB in the context of ES, it is advised that GA might not be sufficient, which is why we also include perceptions of SR and trust.

Trust

Trust is defined as confidence in the reliability and integrity of an exchange partner, which is associated with consistency, honesty, fairness, responsibility, helpfulness and benevolence (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Applied to ZARA and H&M, reliability of a brand refers to consumers' beliefs that it will satisfy their needs. Trust in a brand further means consumers believe the brand's actions to be motivated by positive intentions towards their welfare (Delgado-Ballester, 2003). Trust is also a significant predictor for positive outcomes of

⁵ attitude; summed product of an individual's beliefs on results of behavior and evaluation of those beliefs (Kang et al., 2013)

⁶ subjective norm; summed product of an individual's beliefs about what others think how the individual should behave, as well as the individual's motivation to comply with these beliefs (Kang et al., 2013)

⁷ pro-environmental belief; belief oriented toward the environment and the collective good, stands in contrast with a purely self-interested attitude (Jung et al., 2016)

marketing, such as loyalty, customer retention and PI. Thus, it is vital for companies to establish a trustworthy relationship with their customers. Moreover, trust plays an important role in influencing consumers' opinions about the altruistic motives behind a company's CSR efforts (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014). In the context of SF, consumers increasingly have the sustainable, as well as the traditional option. However, it rests with them to estimate whether the claim of a sustainable product is true. Frequently, consumers still view that a label signaling ES of a product is 'just another green label' for the brand to capture a price premium, or a trick from the marketing or PR department, also denoted as 'perceptions of greenwashing' (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014; Ritch, 2015). This further supports the importance of trust. In accordance with (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014), we expect the reasoning of the previous two paragraphs to be applicable to the case of fashion, and ZARA and H&M as well, and believe that consumers' appraisal of these companies' SR will significantly influence not only their GAs, but also trust in these brands, which leads to the following hypothesis:

H1: Perceptions of social responsibility of sustainability efforts of ZARA and H&M positively affects consumers' general attitude (a) and trust (b).

Purchase Intention (PI)

PI evolved from the fields of *Theory of Reasoned Action*⁸ and *Theory of Planned Behavior*⁹ (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014; Kang et al., 2013). These theories are also considered as cognitive foundations for attitude (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008). An individual's intention to behave in a certain way can be explained by attitudes towards behavior, perceptions about social pressure and perceptions about the difficulty of the behavior (i.e. perceived behavioral control) (Kang et al., 2013). In our empirical setting, we will examine PI as one manifestation of behavioral intention (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014). As previously elaborated, if consumers feel a

⁸ TRA or TORA; expectancy-value model that proposes how beliefs influence attitudes and norms, which in turn affect behavior (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008)

⁹ TRB; model that predicts behaviors over which consumers perceive they have control (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008)

company's SR is credible, they are more likely to have the intention to purchase products from that company (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014), therefore, we hypothesize that if consumers have a positive attitude towards ZARA and H&M in general, this will also affect their PI towards sustainable clothing products of the two brands:

H2: Consumers' general attitude positively influences their purchase intention towards ZARA's Join Life Collection and H&M's Conscious Collection.

As hypothesized earlier, SR influences GAs of consumers, but also their trust towards companies holding their SR promises, in our case in the form of their sustainable clothing lines, and GA is presumably positively related to PI. Logically, trust must also be connected to PI:

H3: Trust in ZARA's Join Life Collection and H&M's Conscious Collection positively influences consumers' purchase intention towards these collections.

Environmental Concern (EC) and Perceived Consumer Effectiveness (PCE)

PCE is defined as a measure of the individual consumer's judgement of the ability to affect environmental resource problems. For instance, the more consumers feel that they can do something about reducing environmental problems, the more they consider the impact of their purchases (Roberts, 1996)¹⁰. PCE has been consistently documented to influence (environmentally) sustainable consumption decisions and CB (Antonetti & Maklan, 2014; Kang et al., 2013). It is a critical antecedent of ECCB and ECBB across several fields (Kim & Choi, 2005; Vermeir & Verbeke, 2008), as well as the fashion industry (Kang et al., 2013). There are different views of the nature of PCE. It was initially considered as a measure or element of attitude, subsequently, it was argued that PCE and attitudes are measured more effectively as two distinct constructs (Berger & Corbin, 1992), nevertheless closely related. However, current literature again discusses PCE as an attitude (Yahya & Hashim, 2013). Furthermore, PCE has also been categorized as a belief (Kim & Choi, 2005). Recent literature

¹⁰ see Appendix 3 for a detailed collection of definitions and conceptualizations of PCE

explains that the effect of PCE on green purchasing behavior is mediated by environmentally favorable attitudes (Kang et al., 2013). PCE also needs to be distinguished from the concept of self-efficacy (SE)¹¹. While some authors argue that both measure the same in the context of sustainability, SE focuses on the individual's ability to perform a task rather than necessarily influencing an outcome (i.e. affecting environmental issues). However, the difference is superfluous, since what matters is the feeling of empowerment connected with PCE (Antonetti & Maklan, 2014). PCE further is a greater predictor of ECCB and ECBB than EC¹². At this point, we need to refer to the chapter about attitudes. Similarly to pro-environmental beliefs as antecedents of attitudes in the ES context, both PCE and EC need to be initialized by some kind of knowledge gathering, and the higher the knowledge, the more distinctive both concepts (Kang et al., 2013). A lack of knowledge or interest for environmental issues can be detrimental (Hustvedt & Dickson, 2009). As EC is also related to an individual's beliefs (Antonetti & Maklan, 2014), and PCE can be characterized as a belief itself, we view that PCE and EC belong together. Nevertheless, we will more strongly concentrate on PCE, since it is a stronger predictor of ECCB than EC. Based on (Kang et al., 2013), we argue that the more consumers feel their individual purchases matter, the more likely they are to purchase sustainable clothes, in our case, from ZARA and H&M, to contribute to solving environmental issues, therefore:

H4: Perceived consumer effectiveness will positively influence consumers' purchase intention towards ZARA's Join Life Collection and H&M's Conscious Collection.

Perceptions of Social Responsibility (SR) and Perceived Consumer Effectiveness (PCE)

SR presumably positively influences GA of consumers in favor towards ZARA and H&M. At the same time, PCE is argued to positively influence PI. Although PCE is advised to be measured distinctively from consumer attitude, it is nevertheless closely related. This induced us to further pursue the question, if SR could be related to PCE, meaning that if

¹¹ SE; belief in one's capability to organize and execute courses of action required to produce given attainments (Antonetti & Maklan, 2014)

¹² EC; individual's general orientation toward the environment (Kim & Choi, 2005)

consumers perceive sustainability efforts of a brand in a positive way, would this enhance their sense of empowerment, that they feel they could individually make a difference with their purchasing decisions? We would like to dedicate a last hypothesis to this idea:

H5: Consumers' perceptions of social responsibility of sustainability efforts of ZARA and H&M positively affects PCE¹³.

3. Methodology

3.1 Measures and Sample

The constructs of interest for this study were carefully selected and adapted from existing literature. *SR* was measured with a scale consisting of five items measuring consumers' perception regarding ZARA's and H&M's efforts to support charitable institutions and their efforts to give back to local communities. *GA* was measured using a three item scale measuring consumers' general opinion of ZARA and H&M. *Trust* was measured with a five-item scale quantifying the degree to which a consumer believes ZARA and H&M will deliver on their promises regarding their sustainable clothing lines (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014). *PI* towards ZARA's and H&M's sustainable collections was measured using a three-item scale (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, Murphy, & Gruber, 2013). *PCE* was quantified with a four-item scale measuring the degree to which consumers feel they can individually contribute to solving environmental issues (Antonetti & Maklan, 2014). All items, except for some demographics, were measured based on a 7-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree; 7= strongly agree)¹⁴. Data were collected using a self-administered online survey, distributed via social media. The survey was directed at young consumers between the age of 18 and 30, and mainly targeted young women. After removing partially or not completed responses, a sample of 216 was used for analysis.

¹³ see Appendix 4 for an illustration of the research model, as discussed with H1-H5

¹⁴ see Appendix 5 for all constructs and items of the survey

3.2 Analysis

First, we tested the constructs and items through confirmatory factor analyses to evaluate whether reliability and validity of all model measurements could be ensured. Subsequently, we developed a structural model and tested it to determine the relations among constructs of interest for hypothesis tests via a partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM).

4. Results

The measurement model included five latent variables and their indicators. It showed an acceptable fit, with a *standardized root mean square residual (SRMR)* below .80 (.60) (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Given the acceptable fit, we then examined reliability and validity of all measurements. A satisfactory level of reliability was ensured, as both *Cronbach's alpha* (α) (with values ranging between .750 and .952) and *composite reliability* exceeded the recommended .70 and .50 thresholds (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Convergent validity was given as well, since all *average variance extracted (AVE)* values were greater than the threshold of .50 (ranging between .75 and .86). We could further confirm discriminant validity, since the square root of each *AVE* value was larger than other correlation values among the latent variables (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The *coefficient of determination* (R^2) showed a value of .502 in trust, .386 in GA, .086 in PCE and .395 in PI. This implies that the overall R^2 is not strong, but shows a quite moderate coefficient of determination, as SR, GA and PCE together explain about 39.5% of the variance in PI (Chin, 1998).

The relationships and the respective significance between the constructs were determined by examining their path coefficients and *t-statistics* through the bootstrapping procedure, using a two-tailed test with a significance level of .05¹⁵. When observing the path coefficients, we

¹⁵ which implies a critical t value of 1.96, see any students' t-distribution table

notice that all constructs are positively related, with the highest *path coefficient value* between SR and trust (.782), followed by a path coefficient of .662 between SR and GA, .486 between trust and PI, .312 between SR and PCE, .125 between GA and PI, and .116 between PCE and PI¹⁶. The effects of SR on GA (*t- value of 14.996, p <.01*) and trust (*t- value of 16.376, p<.01*) were both highly significant. Thus, H1a and H1b were supported. The influence of GA on PI, however, was not significant, therefore, H2 did not find support. The influence of trust on PI (*t- value of 5.506, p <.01*) was significant, therefore, H3 was supported. The influence of PCE on consumers' PI towards ZARA's *Join Life Collection* and H&M's *Conscious Collection* was not significant, thus, H4 could not be supported. H5 addressed that consumers' perceptions of SR of ZARA and H&M would positively affect PCE. Analysis showed significant results (*t- value of 4.913, p <.01*), consequently, H5 was supported (Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics, 2009; Wong, 2016)¹⁷.

5. Discussion

This study aimed to understand the role of consumer attitude, perceptions about SR of brands, trust and PCE in the context of SF. To our best knowledge, this study was the first to examine these constructs altogether, and to apply them to the case of two real and well-known fashion brands, ZARA and H&M, and could make an important contribution to the field of (E)S in the fashion industry. The results of this study underline that positive perceptions regarding ZARA's and H&M's SR efforts not only directly influence what consumers generally think about these brands (i.e. their attitudes), but moreover are vital in enhancing consumers' trust towards ZARA and H&M and their individual feeling of empowerment (i.e. PCE) when it comes to environmental issues. Consumers' trust is further a powerful mechanism to affect PI towards the brands' sustainable clothing lines. While GA could already be shown to positively

¹⁶ see Appendix 6 for an illustration of the structural model test results

¹⁷ see Appendix 7 for the t-statistics and p- values generated through bootstrapping procedure

influence PI of consumers in literature, we failed to find support for this connection. One explanation could be that while respondents could indicate their GA about ZARA and H&M, 34.2% of them were (rather) not familiar with their sustainable clothing lines, thus in these cases, it might have been difficult to then directly translate attitude into PI. Similarly, PCE could be positively related to PI in earlier analyses, however, in our setting, this effect was not significant. Since nearly 50% of our respondents (45.8%) had never purchased any clothing of either ZARA's or H&M's sustainable clothing line before, consumers just might not be ready yet, and PCE would have been more strongly related to a general form of ECCB, as opposed to the specific manifestation (PI) in our context.

5.1 Limitations

Data for our study were gathered through a self-administered survey, and measured consumers' intentions to purchase sustainable clothing, instead of actual behavior. This bears the risk of social desirability bias – respondents seeking to give the 'right' answers they believe to be socially acceptable, which might be different from their behavior in a real purchase situation (Bray et al., 2011; Carrington et al., 2010). Moreover, intention translates into actual behavior only in 30% of the cases¹⁸. However, since (E)S is a rather sensitive matter (Carrigan & Attala, 2001), we view a survey served best in guaranteeing our respondents' anonymity. Since actual behavior is quite difficult to operationalize, intention can be used as a proxy (Carrington et al., 2010). The survey was primarily distributed to young people. Therefore, a generalization of the findings might be limited. Nevertheless, young consumers are the consumers of tomorrow, and are argued to be receptive to SF, in terms of awareness and purchasing power (Barton, Koslow, & Beauchamp, 2014). The survey was mainly directed at young women, again reducing the possibility to generalize our findings. So far, the sustainable clothing lines of ZARA and H&M are almost exclusively designed for women, and H&M only

¹⁸ a phenomenon that is denoted as the 'attitude-behavior-gap' (Fennis et al., 2011)

recently introduced a unisex collection for both genders. Moreover, females still tend to be more concerned about ES than men (Bray et al., 2011).

5.2 Implications

We assumed the presence of EC and pro-environmental beliefs as antecedents for attitude and PCE. However, recently, research found that consumers purchase sustainable goods also for reasons of reinforcing themselves, to signal uniqueness, and a sense of empowerment through avoiding status or mass-produced goods (Bly et al., 2015; Ferraro, Sands, & Brace-Govan, 2016). Since these factors are already known to be powerful players in fashion consumption, they should be incorporated when investigating sustainable CB in the fashion context as well. Furthermore, we supposed the presence of EC would be followed by consumers willing to, at least partially, translate their concerns into ECBB. Since we failed to find support for the influence of attitude and PCE on PI, ECBB could be incorporated into the model, for instance as a mediator between these constructs. Furthermore, our respondents showed a large dispersity concerning their nationalities. We could show that attitudes play a role in SF consumption. Moreover, attitudes are highly connected to an individual's beliefs, values and social norms, which in turn are different from culture to culture (Bly et al., 2015), despite a convergence due to globalization. Therefore, future research could enrich our model by more strongly incorporating different nationalities and cultures, and examine if this makes a difference in terms of attitudes towards ZARA and H&M, issues of trust, and PI.

To further increase trust among consumers, practicing managers (at ZARA and H&M) should communicate their (E)S more openly, however, accompanied by the notion that ES can be fashionable, and that a fast fashion brand can be sustainable. In April 2017, H&M launched its first *Conscious Exclusive Collection*, carrying beautiful clothing, and an excellent example of implementing ES in the fashion context. Natalia Vodianova, Russian model and mother, acts as a spokesperson, informing consumers through a video about the fragileness of our oceans,

damaged by plastic pollution, and to ensure human health, action is urgently required (H&M, 2017b). To increase PCE, marketing managers should consider to communicate messages that highlight the ability of individual consumers' contribution to solving environmental problems, e.g. informing consumers how a single purchase of sustainably produced clothing could add to the wellbeing of our planet¹⁹. Moreover, we advise to phrase these messages in a positive way, as confronting consumers with negative news can lead to confusion and frustration (Bray et al., 2011), possibly harming the effect of PCE.

6. Conclusion

In the beginning, we introduced sustainability, narrowed it down to ES, applied it to the fashion setting, and subsequently to the case of ZARA and H&M. We then presented the specific constructs of perceptions of SR, GA, trust, PI and PCE, that have been consistently reported to occupy an important role in sustainable CB. These constructs were subsequently integrated within one model, and data was collected to analyze the underlying relations within that model. We could find support for the linkage between perceptions of SR and GA, and trust, further for trust and PI, and SR and PCE, but no support for the hypothesized relation between GA and PI, and PCE and PI.

We would like to conclude this work by highlighting once more that it is in the best interest of fashion brands, consumers, and other stakeholders to 'get it right' in this industry, as the urgency and the resulting benefits are apparent. More strongly incorporating (E)S should not be viewed as a constraint, but rather as a promising opportunity.

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¹⁹ see MAC Aids Fund as a best practice example (MAC, 2017)

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Appendix

Appendix 1 – Conceptualizations of Sustainable Fashion

AUTHOR	YEAR	TITLE	JOURNAL	NAME OF CONCEPT	DEFINITION	COMMENTS
Joergens	2006	Ethical Fashion: Myth or Future Trend?	Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management	Ethical Fashion	"Ethical fashion is not only hard to define, as there is no one industry standard. Moreover, it often has common characteristics with other movements such as fair trade and ecology or green fashion. The term ethical fashion is a new approach of "fashion with conscience" in the market and refers to a growing number of ethical clothing companies such as American Apparel, Edun, or Gossypium that strive to attract young mainstream consumers by producing fashionable clothes. The principle is to source garments ethically while providing good working standards and conditions to workers and to provide a sustainable business model in the clothes' country of origin. Furthermore, organic material is used to minimally impact the environment (Mirza, 2004; Laub, 2005). Consequently, ethical fashion can be defined as fashionable clothes that incorporate fair trade principles with sweatshop-free labour conditions while not harming the environment or workers by using biodegradable and organic cotton" (p. 361).	/
Shen et al.	2013	Consumers' Awareness of Sustainable Fashion	Journal of Marketing Management	Sustainable Fashion	"...can be defined as clothing that incorporate fair trade principles with sweatshop-free labor conditions; that does not harm the environment or workers by using biodegradable and organic cotton, and designed for a longer lifetime use; that is produced in an ethical production system, perhaps even locally; that which causes little or no environmental impact and makes use of eco-labeled or recycled materials (Fletcher, 2008; Joergens, 2006). Sustainable fashion so defined envelops both the green and ethical dimensions of fashion. While green fashion dovetails into the environmental theme by promoting utilization of recycled materials and by promoting utilization of recycled materials and biodegradable fibers, by comparison, ethical fashion focuses more on the fair trade principles, and a production system free from sweatshop labor conditions. Both of these dimensions together make the sustainable fashion concept more comprehensive and richer in scope" (p. 135).	"The terms green fashion, ethical fashion, and sustainable fashion are frequently used interchangeably to describe the same concept..." (p. 135)
Manchiraju & Sadachar	2014	Personal Values and Ethical Fashion Consumption	Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management	Ethical Fashion	"Ethical fashion encompasses 'high-quality and well-designed products that are environmentally sustainable, help disadvantaged groups and reflect good working conditions' (Domeisen, 2006, p. 2)" (p.358).	/
Soler et al.	2015	Construction of Silence on Issues of Sustainability through Branding in the Fashion	Journal of Marketing Management	Eco-Fashion	"...clothing designed to last long, produced in an ethical manner, causing minimal environmental impact and using eco-labelled or recycled materials" (p. 219).	/

		Market Sustainable Fashion				
Niinimäki	2015	Ethical Foundations in Sustainable Fashion	Textiles and Clothing Sustainability	Sustainable Fashion	/	/

Table 1: Conceptualizations of Sustainable Fashion

Appendix 2 – Conceptualizations of Sustainable (Fashion) Consumer Behavior

AUTHOR	YEAR	TITLE	JOURNAL	NAME OF CONCEPT	DEFINTION	COMMENT
Joergens	2006	Ethical Fashion: Myth or Future Trend?	Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management	ethical fashion consumption	/	fashion context
Valor	2007	The Influence of Information about Labor Abuses on Consumer Choice of Clothes: A Grounded Theory Approach	Journal of Marketing Management	ethical consumerism / consumption / socially responsible buying	/	fashion context
d'Astous & Legendre	2009	Understanding Consumers' Ethical Justifications: A Scale for Appraising Consumers' Reasons for Not Behaving Ethically	Journal of Business Ethics	ethical consumption behavior	/	non-fashion context
Hustvedt & Dickson	2009	Consumer Likelihood of Purchasing Organic Cotton Apparel Influence of Attitudes and Self-Identity	Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management	environmentally and socially responsible consumer behavior	/	fashion context
Carrington et al.	2010	Why Ethical Consumers Don't Walk Their Talk: Towards a Framework for Understanding the Gap Between the Ethical Purchase Intentions and Actual Buying Behaviour of Ethically Minded Consumers	Journal of Business Ethics	ethical consumerism / consumer behavior	"Ethically minded consumers feel a responsibility towards the environment and/or to society, and seek to express their values through ethical consumption and purchasing (or boycotting) behaviour (De Pelsmacker et al., 2005; Shaw and Shui, 2002)" (p. 140).	non-fashion context

Bray et al.	2011	An Exploratory Study into the Factors Impeding Ethical Consumption	Journal of Business Ethics	ethical consumption	"...ethical consumption, where enhanced satisfaction might result from purchasing ethically sourced goods, or guilt from buying a less ethical alternative (Chatzidakis et al., 2006)" (p. 598)	non-fashion context
Fennis et al.	2011	Bridging the Intention–Behavior Gap: Inducing Implementation Intentions through Persuasive Appeals	Journal of Consumer Psychology	sustainable consumption	/	non-fashion context
Singh et al.	2012	Does Having an Ethical Brand Matter? The Influence of Consumer Perceived Ethicality on Trust, Affect and Loyalty	Journal of Business Ethics	ethical consumerism	/	non-fashion context
Yeonshin	2011	Understanding Green Purchase: The Influence of Collectivism, Personal Values and Environmental Attitudes, and the Moderating Effect of Perceived Consumer Effectiveness	Seoul Journal of Business	green buying behavior / green purchase / environmentally responsible buying	"Environmentally responsible buying can be considered as a specific type of socially conscious behavior (Anderson and Cunningham 1972) because the behavior (e.g., buying and consuming green products) reflects a conscious concern for the environmental consequences related to the consumption of particular products or services. Consumers who take into account the ecological consequences (including people and nature) of their private consumptions would be more favorable toward the environment and the use of green products compared to the others who do not care about them" (p. 67).	non-fashion context
Joy et al.	2012	Fast Fashion, Sustainability, and the Ethical Appeal of Luxury Brands	Fashion Theory	sustainable consumption	/	fashion context

Wesley et al.	2012	The Role of Perceived Consumer Effectiveness and Motivational Attitude on Socially Responsible Purchasing Behavior in South Korea	Journal of Global Marketing	socially responsible consumption	"Referred to as socially responsible consumption, the purchasing behavior of an ethical consumer can be used to express their feelings of responsibility toward society in general. Socially responsible consumption can be defined as a purchase that takes into account some ethical issue (human rights, labor conditions, animal well-being, environment, etc.) and is used freely as criteria by consumers (Doane, 2001; Ozkan, 2009). This behavior is one where consumers are aware of the effect that their consumption will have on other individuals living in local, national, and international communities (McGregor, 1999), causing them to base their decisions on how their behavior impacts themselves and as well as society and the larger environment" (p. 29).	non-fashion context
Leary et al.	2013	Changing the Marketplace one Behavior at a Time: Perceived Marketplace Influence and Sustainable Consumption	Journal of Business Research	sustainable consumption behavior	"We define sustainable consumption as behavior intended to meet the needs of the current generation and benefit the environment without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to satisfy their needs" (p. 1954).	non-fashion context
Shen et al.	2013	Consumers' Awareness of Sustainable Fashion	Journal of Marketing Management	sustainable purchase behavior	"Sustainable purchase behaviors are defined as consumers selecting recyclable products, being socially responsible, and taking other actions to protect the environment (Fraj & Martines, 2006)" (p. 136).	non-fashion context
Kang et al.	2013	Environmentally Sustainable Textile and Apparel Consumption: The Role of Consumer Knowledge, Perceived Consumer Effectiveness and Perceived Personal Relevance	International Journal of Consumer Studies	environmentally sustainable consumption	/	fashion context

Yahya & Hashim	2013	The Relationship between Perceived Consumer Effectiveness, Environmental Concern and Ecologically Conscious Behavior	Business Strategy and Organizational Behavior	ecologically conscious consumer behavior (ECCB)	/	non-fashion context
Antonetti & Maklan	2014	Feelings that Make a Difference: How Guilt and Pride Convince Consumers of the Effectiveness of Sustainable Consumption Choices	Journal of Business Ethics	sustainable consumption	/	non-fashion context
Haws et al.	2014	Seeing the World through GREEN-Tinted Glasses: Green Consumption Values and Responses to Environmentally Friendly Products	Journal of Consumer Psychology	green consumption	"...the tendency to express the value of environmental protection through one's purchases and consumption behaviors" (p. 337).	non-fashion context
Bly et al.	2015	Exit from the High Street: An Exploratory Study of Sustainable Fashion Consumption Pioneers	International Journal of Consumer Studies	sustainable fashion consumption	"...it is probably not surprising that the concept of sustainable fashion consumption is a highly contested concept, if not an oxymoron" (p. 126).	fashion context
Luchs & Kumar	2015	“Yes, but this Other One Looks Better/Works Better”: How do Consumers Respond to Trade-offs Between Sustainability and Other Valued Attributes?	Journal of Business Ethics	ethical / sustainable consumption	/	non-fashion context
Ritch	2015	Consumers Interpreting Sustainability: Moving beyond Food to Fashion	International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management	eco-fashion consumption / sustainable fashion consumption	/	fashion context
Soler et al.	2015	Construction of Silence on Issues of Sustainability through Branding in the Fashion Market Sustainable Fashion	Journal of Marketing Management	eco-fashion consumption	/	fashion context

Jung et al.	2016	Green Leather for Ethical Consumers in China and Korea: Facilitating Ethical Consumption with Value–Belief–Attitude Logic	Journal of Business Ethics	ethical fashion consumption	"...ethical fashion consumers can be defined as those who are concerned with the effects on the external world around them when they buy, use, and dispose of fashion products. They undertake a range of ethical consumption practices including boycotts; positive buying; fully screened comparative ethical ratings across whole product areas; relationship purchasing, where consumers seek to educate sellers about their ethical needs; anti-consumerism; and/or or sustainable consumerism avoiding unsustainable fashion products" (p. 485).	fashion context
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Table 2: Conceptualizations of Sustainable (Fashion) Consumer Behavior

Appendix 3 – Conceptualizations of Perceived Consumer Effectiveness

AUTHOR	YEAR	TITLE	JOURNAL	DEFINITION	COMMENT
Berger & Corbin	1992	Perceived Consumer Effectiveness and Faith in Others as Moderators of Environmentally Responsible Behaviors	Journal of Public Policy & Marketing	"Perceived consumer effectiveness (PCE) was initially considered a measure or element of the attitude itself and consequently was modeled as a direct predictor of environmentally conscious behavior [see Allen, Schewe, and Liander 1980; Antil 1984; Kinnear, Taylor, and Ahmed 1974; Ritchie, McDougall, and Claxton 1981; Seligman et al. 1979; Webster 1975]. However, recent studies show that attitudes and PCE can be modeled more effectively as two distinct constructs [see Allen 1982; Ellen, Weiner, and Cobb-Walgren 1991] (p. 80)".	non-fashion context
Lord & Putrevu	1998	Acceptance of Recycling Appeals: The Moderating Role of Perceived Consumer Effectiveness	Journal of Marketing Management	"...perceived consumer effectiveness" (PCE: consumers' confidence in their ability to improve the environment). PCE is expected to help consumers move beyond the psychological discomfort arising from fear appeals or other negative messages" (p. 581).	non-fashion context

Kim & Choi	2005	Antecedents of Green Purchase Behavior: An Examination of Collectivism, Environmental Concern, and PCE	Advances in Consumer Research	"Similar to the concept of self-efficacy in social learning theory (Bandura 19K6). Perceived Consumer Effectiveness (PCE) refers to the extent to which individuals believe that their actions make a difference in solving a problem (Ellen, Weiner, and Cobb-Walgren 1991). PCE, defined as "the evaluation of the self in the context of the issue" (Berger and Corbin 1992), differs from an attitude that reflects an evaluation of an issue (Tesser and Shaffer 1990)" (p. 593).	non-fashion context
Vermeir & Ver	2008	Sustainable Food Consumption among Young Adults in Belgium: Theory of Planned Behaviour and the role of Confidence and Values	Ecological Economics	"Perceived consumer effectiveness (PCE), or the extent to which the consumer believes that his personal efforts can contribute to the solution of a problem..." (p. 544).	non-fashion context (food)
Yeonshin	2011	Understanding Green Purchase: The Influence of Collectivism, Personal Values and Environmental Attitudes, and the Moderating Effect of Perceived Consumer Effectiveness	Seoul Journal of Business	"...PCE, defined as "the evaluation of the self in the context of the issue" (Berger and Corbin 1992: 80-81) differs from an attitude that reflects an evaluation of an issue (Tesser and Shaffer 1990) and predicts importantly environmentally conscious consumer behavior (Balderjahn 1988; Berger and Corbin 1992; Ellen, Wiener, and Cobb-Walgren 1991; Roberts 1996; Roberts and Bacon 1997; Straughan and Roberts 1999)" (p. 74).	non-fashion context
Wesley et al.	2012	The Role of Perceived Consumer Effectiveness and Motivational Attitude on Socially Responsible Purchasing Behavior in South Korea	Journal of Global Marketing	"...referred to as perceived consumer effectiveness (PCE), consumers' attitudes and responses to sustainable appeals are a function of their beliefs that individuals can positively influence the outcome of such problems (Ellen, Wiener, & Cobb-Walgren, 1991; Straughan & Roberts, 1999). Consumers must perceive that their own individual actions will have a real and observable outcome (Thompson, 1981) and will result in a difference making solution to a problem. PCE has consistently been linked to socially conscious attitudes (e.g., Ellen et al, 1991; Roberts, 1995, 1996; Straughan & Roberts, 1999; Vermeir & Verbeke, 2008)" (p. 38).	non-fashion context

Kang et al.	2013	Environmentally Sustainable Textile and Apparel Consumption: The Role of Consumer Knowledge, Perceived Consumer Effectiveness and Perceived Personal Relevance	International Journal of Consumer Studies	"PCE is a measure of the subject's judgment in the ability of individual consumers to affect environmental resource problems (Roberts, 1996). For example, the more consumers feel that they can do something about reducing pollution, the more they consider the social impact of their purchases (Roberts, 1996). A high level of PCE motivates consumers to show their positive attitudes towards sustainable products through actual consumption behaviour (Vermeir and Verbeke, 2008)" (p. 444).	fashion context
Leary et al.	2013	Changing the Marketplace one Behavior at a Time: Perceived Marketplace Influence and Sustainable Consumption	Journal of Business Research	".. Perceived Consumer Effectiveness (PCE), which is the belief that the efforts of an individual can make a difference in the solution to a problem (Ellen et al., 1991)" (p. 1954).	non-fashion context
Yahya & Hashim	2013	The Relationship between Perceived Consumer Effectiveness, Environmental Concern and Ecologically Conscious Behavior	Business Strategy and Organizational Behavior	"Perceived consumer effectiveness (hereinafter PCE) refers to the extent to which people believe that their actions make a difference in solving a problem" (p. 93).	non-fashion context
Antonetti & Maklan	2014	Feelings that Make a Difference: How Guilt and Pride Convince Consumers of the Effectiveness of Sustainable Consumption Choices	Journal of Business Ethics	"...consumers are more likely to act when they feel that their decisions will make a difference (Rice 2006; Roberts 1996)" (p. 117)	non-fashion context

Table 3: Conceptualizations of Perceived Consumer Effectiveness

Appendix 4 – Illustration of the Research Model

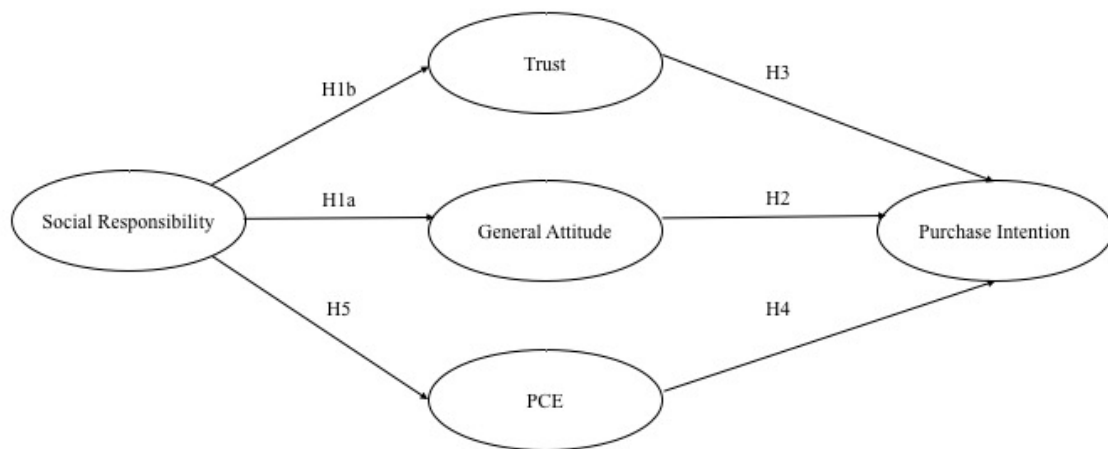


Figure 1: Illustration of the Research Model

Appendix 5 – Constructs and Items of the Survey

CONSTRUCT	ITEM		SOURCE
Shopping Frequency	SF	How often do you shop for new clothes?	Ferraro et al., 2016
Consumption Values	CV1	I can achieve recognition when I own fashionable clothes.	Jung et al., 2016
	CV2	I think people who buy fashionable clothes seem to succeed socially.	Jung et al., 2016
	CV3	I am envious of people who buy fashionable clothes.	Jung et al., 2016
	CV4	When I choose clothing, I consider products' value to price ratio important.	Jung et al., 2016
	CV5	I consider how strong and safe products are when I choose products.	Jung et al., 2016
	CV6	I think products' utility is important.	Jung et al., 2016
	CV7	Shopping and looking around stores is an enjoyable pastime for me.	Jung et al., 2016
	CV8	I spend much time researching new clothing because I am interested..	Jung et al., 2016
	CV9	When I purchase clothing I like to fully look around various stores.	Jung et al., 2016
Fashion Shopping at ZARA and H&M	FS	Have you shopped for clothes at fashion chains like ZARA and H&M before?	/
General Attitude	AT1	I think ZARA and H&M are very good brands (companies).	Kang & Hustvedt, 2014
	AT2	I think ZARA and H&M are very useful brands (companies).	Kang & Hustvedt, 2014
	AT3	My opinion of ZARA and H&M is very favorable.	Kang & Hustvedt, 2014
Environmental Concern	EC1	I am extremely worried about the state of the world's environment and what it will mean for my future.	Kim & Choi, 2005
	EC2	Mankind is severely abusing the environment.	Kim & Choi, 2005
	EC3	When humans interfere with nature it often produces disastrous consequences.	Kim & Choi, 2005
	EC4	The balance of nature is very delicate and easily upset.	Kim & Choi, 2005
	EC5	Humans must live in harmony with nature in order to survive.	Kim & Choi, 2005
Eco-Conscious Buyer Behavior	ECBB1	I make every effort to buy paper products made from recycled paper.	Leary et al., 2013
	ECBB2	When I purchase products, I always make a conscious effort to buy those products that are low in pollutants.	Leary et al., 2013
	ECBB3	I try only to buy products that can be recycled.	Leary et al., 2013
Perceptions of Social Responsibility	SR1	ZARA and H&M are committed to using a portion of their profits to help nonprofits.	Kang & Hustvedt, 2014
	SR2	ZARA and H&M give back to the communities in which they do business.	Kang & Hustvedt, 2014
	SR3	Local institutions benefit from ZARA's and H&M's contributions.	Kang & Hustvedt, 2014
	SR4	ZARA and H&M integrate charitable contributions into their business activities.	Kang & Hustvedt, 2014
	SR5	ZARA and H&M are likely to be interested in corporate giving.	Kang & Hustvedt, 2014
Knowledge of Sustainable Fashion Offering of ZARA and H&M	KSF	How familiar are you with ZARA's Join Life Collection or H&M's Conscious Collection?	/
Previous Experience with ZARA's Join Life Collection or H&M's Conscious Collection	EXP	Have you ever bought clothing from ZARA's Join Life Collection or H&M's Conscious Collection?	/
Purchase Intention	PI1	It is very likely that I will buy products from ZARA's Join Life Collection or H&M's Conscious Collection.	Öberseder et al., 2014
	PI2	I will purchase products from ZARA's Join Life Collection or H&M's Conscious Collection the next time I need clothing.	Öberseder et al., 2014
	PI3	I will definitely try other products from ZARA's Join Life Collection or H&M's Conscious Collection.	Öberseder et al., 2014
Trust	TT1	ZARA and H&M do not pretend to be something they're not.	Kang & Hustvedt, 2014
	TT2	ZARA's and H&M's product claims are believable.	Kang & Hustvedt, 2014
	TT3	Over time, my experiences with ZARA and H&M have led me to expect it to keep its promises, no more and no less.	Kang & Hustvedt, 2014
	TT4	ZARA and H&M have names you can trust.	Kang & Hustvedt, 2014
	TT5	ZARA and H&M deliver what they promise.	Kang & Hustvedt, 2014
Perceived Consumer Effectiveness	PCE1	Through my personal choices I can contribute to the solution of environmental issues.	Antonetti & Maklan, 2014
	PCE2	My personal actions are significant enough in affecting environmental problems.	Antonetti & Maklan, 2014
	PCE3	Environmental issues are affected by my individual choices.	Antonetti & Maklan, 2014
	PCE4	Ecological degradation is partly a consequence of my own consumption choices.	Antonetti & Maklan, 2014
Current residency	RES	Your current residency is in	/
Marital status	MARIT	Your marital status is	/
Age	AGE	How old are you?	/
Nationality	NAT	/	/
Gender	GEN	/	/
Monthly income	INC	Your monthly income lies between	/
Employment relationship	EMPL	Your current employment relationship	/

Table 4: Constructs and Items of the Survey

Appendix 6 – Illustration of the Structural Model Test Results

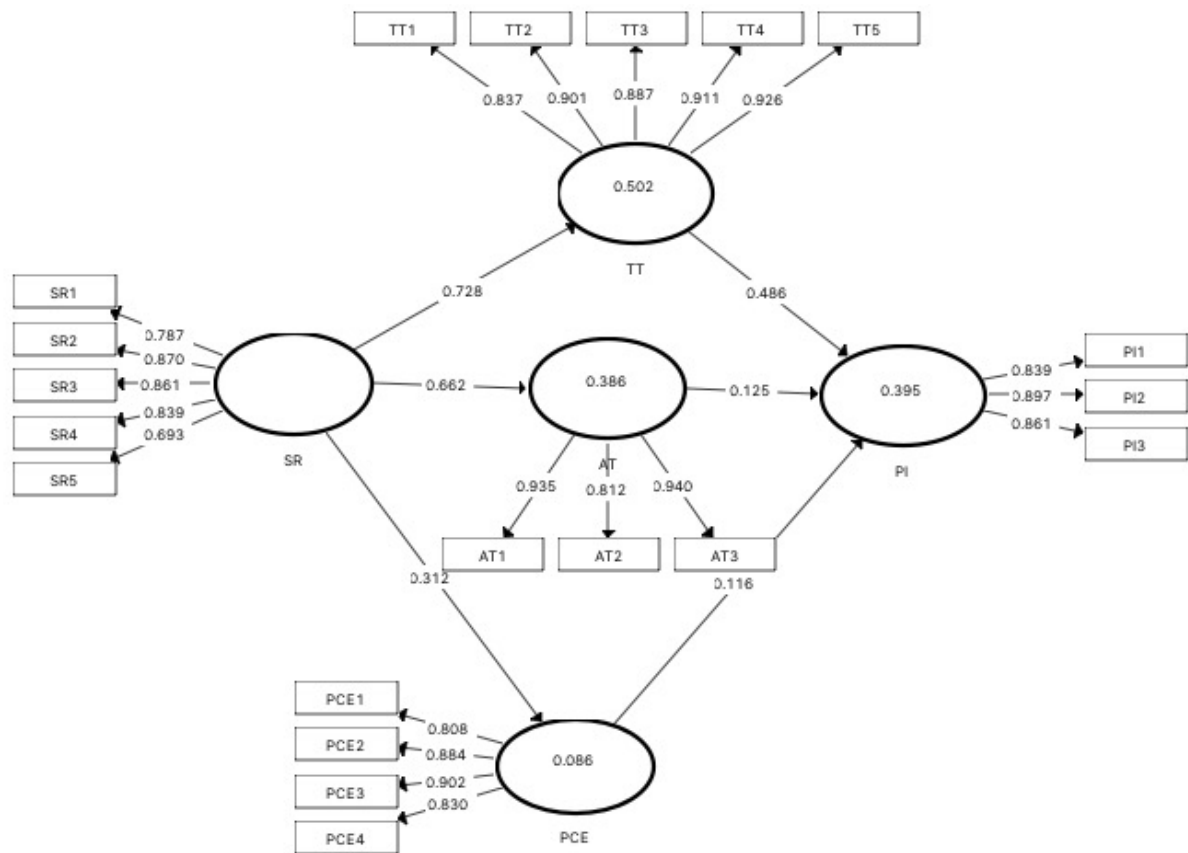


Figure 2: Illustration of the Structural Model Test Results

Appendix 7 – T- Statistics and P- Values Table

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
AT -> PI	0,125	0,128	0,090	1,379	0,169
PCE -> PI	0,116	0,120	0,061	1,898	0,058
SR -> AT	0,662	0,666	0,044	14,996	0,000
SR -> PCE	0,312	0,313	0,064	4,913	0,000
SR -> TT	0,728	0,729	0,044	16,376	0,000
TT -> PI	0,486	0,480	0,088	5,506	0,000

Table 5: T-Statistics and P-Values Table

Declaration of Honor

I do solemnly declare that I prepared this thesis independently and that the thoughts taken directly or indirectly from other sources are indicated accordingly. This work has not been submitted to any other examination authority and further not yet been published.

Lisbon, May 26th, 2017

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Hannah Neumann", written over a horizontal line.

Hannah Laura Neumann